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recites refractory metals and specifies that the refractory metal from the first metal silicide is different than the refractory metal from the second refractory metal silicide. Independent claim 37 recites a semiconductor device but is similar in scope to claim 31 in that it recites the same local interconnect structure. Independent claim 38 relates to a memory array but is also similar in scope to claim 31 in that it recites the same local interconnect structure.

Okamoto teaches a semiconductor device comprising a metal silicide film that is a single-layer ternary silicide film. The metal silicide film is a multilayer film consisting of two or three types of metal silicide films. The Office Action includes the general assertion that Okamoto includes a first metal silicide, a second metal silicide, and an intermetallic compound. However, the Office Action includes no specific reference to any structure in Okamoto that corresponds to the recited intermetallic compound. Okamoto merely teaches the formation of a ternary silicide (see Col. 5, lines 35-41 and 55-61) as opposed to the formation of an intermetallic compound. Consequently, the elements of Okamoto do not match the recitations of the claims of the present invention and therefore cannot be an anticipatory reference.

Regarding the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), the Office Action further relies upon the teachings of Shepard. However, this rejection also relies upon the same mischaracterization of Okamoto discussed above. Shepard also fails to teach the recited intermetallic compound.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that, in view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned to resolve efficiently any formal matters or to discuss any

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aspects of the application or of this response. Otherwise, early notification of allowable subject matter is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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By


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